



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

FORMER OFFICERS OF CARE INTERNATIONAL, INC., INDICTED

WORCESTER, Mass. – A Libyan national and a Lebanese national were arrested today on federal charges arising from their involvement with Care International, Inc. (“Care”), a purported charitable organization based in Boston.

United States Attorney Michael J. Sullivan; Kenneth W. Kaiser, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in New England; Joseph A. Galasso, Special Agent-in-Charge of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Criminal Investigation; and Robin M. Avers, Special Agent-in-Charge of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) together announced that a six-count indictment was unsealed today charging Emadeddin Muntasser, 40, of Braintree, Mass., and Muhammed Mubayyid, 40, of Shrewsbury, Mass., each with one count of “Engaging in a Scheme to Conceal Material Facts from the United States” and one count of “Conspiring to Defraud the United States.” Muntasser is also charged in one count with making false statements and Mubayyid is charged in three separate counts with making and filing false tax returns.

“Organizations that conceal their true activities to abuse our tax laws, and in this case fund their support of the mujahideen and jihad, will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law,” said U.S. Attorney Sullivan. “Making false statements and representations to governmental officials as is alleged in this case will not be tolerated. Our government requires truthful and complete information to uphold our nation’s laws.”

According to the indictment, in the 1990’s Muntasser was involved in operating the Boston branch office of the Al-Kifah Refugee Center (“Al-Kifah”), a supporter of “mujahideen,” or Muslim holy warriors, engaged in “jihad,” or religiously-based military conflict overseas. Al-Kifah Boston published a pro-jihad newsletter called “Al-Hussam,” meaning “The Sword” in Arabic. According to the indictment, following media reports in 1993 linking Al-Kifah to the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, Muntasser founded Massachusetts Care International, Inc. (“Care”), a purported charitable organization. The indictment alleges that despite Muntasser’s representations on Care’s Articles of Incorporation that the organization was exclusively involved in “charitable, religious, educational and scientific purposes,” Care was in fact engaged in the solicitation and expenditure of funds to support the mujahideen and promote jihad, was located at Al-Kifah Boston’s office and assumed publication of Al-Kifah’s pro-jihad newsletter, Al-Hussam.

Count One of the indictment alleges that between April 1993 and April 2003 Muntasser, as Care’s president, and Mubayyid, as Care’s treasurer, engaged in a scheme to conceal material facts from the IRS, FBI and the

former Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) related to Care. The indictment specifically alleges that Muntasser and Mubayyid concealed the fact that Care was an outgrowth of, and successor to, Al-Kifah Boston and was engaged in non-charitable activities.

“Those who defraud the government to obtain tax-exempt status for charities will be held accountable,” stated ICE’s Avers. “Today’s arrests are the result of a collaborative law enforcement investigation and demonstrate our joint commitment to enforcing these violations.”

Count Two of the indictment alleges that Muntasser and Mubayyid conspired together and with others to defraud the United States in connection with Care’s qualifying with the IRS for tax-exempt status. According to the indictment, shortly after Care was incorporated in 1993, Muntasser sought and was granted a tax-exempt status for Care from the IRS under Section 501(c)(3) on the basis that Care was a charitable organization. An organization granted such tax-exempt status renders tax deductible any donations the organization receives. According to the indictment, from 1993 to 2003, Care collected approximately \$1.7 million in tax deductible donations. The indictment specifically alleges that from 1993 to 2003, Muntasser and Mubayyid and others conspired to deceive the IRS concerning Care’s designation as a Section 501(c)(3) charitable organization in 1993 and that it should continue to be accorded that status thereafter. According to the indictment, in addition to publishing the pro-jihad newsletter, Al-Hussam, Care published articles about military operations and activities of the mujahideen on its Web site from approximately 1998 to 2001, and printed and distributed solicitations for tax deductible donations to support the mujahideen from approximately 1994 to 2001, as well as published and distributed an English translation of “Join the Caravan,” a pro-jihad book.

“One of the enforcement priorities in the IRS Strategic Plan is the review of charitable organizations in order to discourage and deter non-compliance within tax-exempt and government entities,” said Joseph Galasso, of IRS-Criminal Investigations in Boston.

Counts Three, Four and Five of the indictment allege that Mubayyid made and filed false tax returns for Care for calendar years 1997, 1999 and 2000 by never revealing to the IRS that Care was engaged in activities involving the solicitation and expenditure of funds to support the mujahideen and promote jihad.

The last count of the indictment alleges that on April 7, 2003, Muntasser made false statements to the FBI by stating that he had not traveled to Afghanistan in 1994. It is alleged that, in fact, Muntasser had traveled to Pakistan and Afghanistan in furtherance of Care’s activities.

Muntasser and Mubayyid were arrested this morning on the charges and appeared in federal court in Worcester before U.S. Chief Magistrate Judge Charles B. Swartwood III. Muntasser was ordered released to home confinement with electronic monitoring. Mubayyid is being detained pending a detention hearing scheduled for Monday, May 16, 2005, at 11 a.m. If convicted, Muntasser and Mubayyid each face up to five years in prison on each of the “Engaging in a Scheme to Conceal Material Facts from the United States” and “Conspiring to Defraud the United States” counts. Mubayyid also faces up to three years in prison on each of the three false tax return counts; and Muntasser faces up to five years in prison on the false statements counts.

The investigation is continuing.

The case was investigated by the FBI, IRS-Criminal Investigations, and ICE. It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Michael D. Ricciuti and B. Stephanie Siegmann in Sullivan's Anti-Terrorism and National Security Unit.

The details contained in the indictment are allegations. The defendants are presumed to be innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.